EDUCATION OF MIGRATORY CHILDREN

Maintenance and Transfer of Health and Educational Information
For Migrant Students by the States

This report is written in accordance with Section 1308 (b)(4) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF MIGRANT EDUCATION

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Congress directed the Department to "assist the States in developing effective methods for the electronic transfer of student records and in determining the number of migratory children in each State" through section 1308 (b)(4) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). In particular, in section 1308(b), Congress required the Department, in consultation with the States, to ensure the linkage of migrant student record systems for the purpose of electronically exchanging among the States health and educational information for migratory students. The linkage of migrant student record systems, including those systems used before and after the enactment of NCLB, is to occur in a cost-effective manner. Congress further directed the Department to initiate this effort by publishing for public comment a proposed set of data elements that each State receiving funds under Title I, Part C, shall be required to collect for the purposes of the electronic transfer of migrant student information and the requirements that States shall meet for immediate access to such information.

Section 1308 (b)(4) of the ESEA requires the Secretary of Education to report to Congress the Department's findings and recommendations regarding the maintenance and transfer of health and educational information for migratory students by the States. Although some States have developed alternative methods for maintaining migrant student records since the termination of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) in 1995, a single mechanism for electronically linking and transferring migrant student information nationally does not exist. This report:

A. Reviews the progress of States in developing and linking electronic records transfer systems;

B. Makes recommendations for the development and linkage of such systems; and

C. Makes recommendations for measures that the Department and States may take to ensure continuity of services provided for migratory students.

A. Progress of States in Developing and Linking Electronic Records Transfer Systems

Currently, 42 States use three major migrant student record systems developed and supported by private or non-profit vendors. The other States are using customized electronic migrant student record systems developed and maintained by an in-house or outside consultant. No single mechanism currently enables various electronic student record systems to share migrant student data on a national basis.

B. Recommendations for Development and Linkage of Systems

The Department consulted with States and other migrant education experts to develop the recommendations cited in this report and determined that the development of a

mechanism to link and transfer migrant student records is technologically possible. This report includes a proposed Action Plan to design and develop such a linkage. However, the Department has also determined that the main barriers to successful migrant student records transfer are non-technological factors. The major barriers to establishing a successful system for exchanging migrant student record transfer include 1) timely and proper identification of the most highly mobile migrant student population, 2) lack of State cooperation in maintaining and using migrant student data, 3) absence of federal incentives to secure State cooperation, 4) absence of accepted and uniform migrant student record data, and 5) States' concerns regarding the burden and expense of maintaining multiple parallel school management information systems while continuing to provide adequate direct services to migrant children. Findings and recommendations for both technological and non-technological factors are presented in detail in the report. The recommendations are:

1. To conduct research to identify the most advantageous record linking strategy, specifically exploring a consolidated database;

2. To analyze the costs of implementing a new migrant student record linking mechanism, in particular for secondary course placement and credit accrual purposes;

3. To design a migrant student record exchange linking mechanism to facilitate school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual decisions for migrant children; and to focus particularly on the needs of highly mobile secondary students;

4. To issue a list of minimum data elements, in cooperation with State and local educational officials, for publication in the Federal Register to help States to better plan on-going modifications and improvements to their State migrant student record systems; and

5. To encourage the necessary level of data collection and student record maintenance in cooperation with the States and local educational officials.

C.   Recommendations for Continuity of Service

This report provides several recommendations for measures that the Department and the States may take to ensure the continuity of services provided migrant students. These measures include improved migrant child identification and recruitment practices, strategic placement of migrant education staff, and support for relationships among educators who share migrant children.

D.   Conclusion

Although some States have developed alternative methods for maintaining migrant student records since the termination of the Migrant Student Records Transfer System (MSRTS), a single acceptable mechanism for electronically linking and transferring migrant student information nationally does not exist. The major barriers to establishing a successful migrant student record transfer system are not rooted in the lack of adequate technological solutions, but in more complex non-technological concerns. The Department will continue to explore a variety of solutions considering the needs of migrant students, State and local educational officials, the latest technological innovations, and the costs to all parties involved.

Despite the non-technological challenges identified in this report, the Department believes that, in cooperation with States, a successful system for exchanging migrant student records can be developed and will benefit migrant students nationwide. The ability to exchange migrant student records efficiently will facilitate the timely enrollment and placement of all migrant students by providing better access to basic school enrollment and health information. An efficient records transfer system will particularly benefit highly mobile secondary migrant students by providing and maintaining course credit accrual information necessary for high school graduation.

The Department is committed to improving access to migrant student records at the school in which migrant students are enrolled. In concert with the services provided by local school districts, the services of the Title I, Part C, Migrant Education Program will help ensure that all migrant students meet challenging State academic standards and graduate from high school with an education that prepares the student for responsible leadership, further learning, and productive employment.

Maintenance and Transfer of Health and Educational Information For Migrant Students by the States

I.   Charge from Congress

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), reauthorized the Title I Migrant Education Program (MEP). In accordance with Section 1308 (b)(4) of ESEA, the Secretary of Education must report the Department's findings and recommendations regarding the maintenance and transfer of health and educational information for migratory students by the States to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and Workforce of the House of Representatives. Although some States have developed alternative methods for maintaining migrant student records since the termination of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) in 1995, a single acceptable mechanism for electronically linking and transferring migrant student information nationally does not exist. The report provides:

A. A review of the progress of States in developing and linking electronic records transfer systems;

B. Recommendations for the development and linkage of such systems; and

C. Recommendations for measures that the Department and the States may take to ensure continuity of services provided for migratory students.

II.   Background

For over twenty five years, Congress and the Department (and its predecessor, the U.S. Office of Education in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare) supported the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) as the primary vehicle for transferring educational and health information on migrant students for use by the new schools those migrant students attend. The MSRTS was a State supported mainframe system, created in 1969 and operated by the Arkansas Department of Education in Little Rock, Arkansas. State and local migrant personnel entered student academic, health, and assessment records into the MSRTS. This system allowed States to transfer student records among the States since all information was stored in a centralized database. Forty-nine States entered data into the MSRTS and it served as a central repository of information on over 600,000 migrant students. Although users of the MSRTS connected to the system via leased lines and modems, the methods for sending and receiving information did not reflect the current technological trends.

Additionally, there were long data entry delays in entering the requested information. Various studies carried out over the years found that local practitioners often did not rely on data contained in the system, and that it was not cost-effective. The Department acknowledged the States' concerns and recognized the value of timely data as a critical system success factor as early as 1987, when a MSRTS utilization study, conducted by the Region I Technical Assistance Center, revealed that timeliness of information was one of the most critical reasons why data from the MSRTS were not used.

In 1988, the Hawkins-Stafford Act (Public Law 100-297) authorized the establishment of a National Commission on Migrant Education (NCME). At that time, Congress mandated that the Commission study the function and effectiveness of the MSRTS and address the following questions:

1) What role has MSRTS performed in assisting the migrant population?

2) To what degree does the classroom teacher utilize MSRTS for enhancing the education program at the local level and?

3) Is MSRTS cost-effective?

4) How well would a system, similar to MSRTS, work for other mobile populations, such as students in the inner cities or in the Department of Defense overseas schools?

The findings of the Commission were the following:

1) As use of the MSRTS expanded, it became mostly a reporting tool for State data-management reporting rather than an instrument used for the exchange of student information at the local level;

2) Because the reporting requirements that States established for the MSRTS became more complex and burdensome to local schools, educators became less responsive and timely in collecting data;

3) Because MSRTS remained a paper-based system for collecting and reporting information and did not reflect current technological advancements for sending and receiving information, the flow of information was impeded. Consequently, without access to timely information from MSRTS, local educators used MSRTS for validating decisions already made, rather than as a means to exchange student information;

4) The type of information reported by each State and the format in which information was collected were never standardized across States nor widely accepted by local schools for making decisions about the academic or health status of a student; and

5) Migrant students and parents were not routinely notified of their MSRTS numbers nor trained in the importance and uses of the MSRTS record.

After reviewing the MSRTS, the Commission found that over time, the MSRTS's usefulness to local educators had diminished and made six recommendations for immediate as well as future actions:

1) Significantly reduce the migrant student's MSRTS record to essential data on school enrollment and health status;

2) Increase direct access of local educators to MSRTS;

3) Provide a role for migrant students and their families in MSRTS;

4) Conduct a technical assessment of MSRTS with an independent research agency;

5) Design data-quality procedures in MSRTS to ensure completeness, accuracy and security of information; and

6) Ensure the transfer of data in a timely and efficient method by having the Secretary of Education certify that State agencies are complying with MSRTS requirements before approving their applications for migrant programs.

In 1993, the Region C Technical Assistance Center completed a "MSRTS Student Record Item Survey" for the MSRTS committee of the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education.[1] The purpose of the survey was to gather information from representative migrant education-funded staffs about the importance and usefulness of items located on the MSRTS health and education records. This study also highlighted the importance of receiving useful and timely information. Of the 265 respondents who provided comments, 68 percent reported that they did not think that the educational record was useful. Two reasons respondents gave were the lack of quality information provided and the unavailability of information in a timely manner. Educators often had to make decisions about the education program for migrant students prior to receipt of the educational record. These findings were in line with conclusions made in the 1994 General Accounting Office (GAO) report (discussed on page 4) and Department sponsored Focus Group reports (2003).

Additionally, in 1993, the Independent Review Panel of the National Assessment of Chapter 1 noted a number of concerns about MSRTS. These concerns related to the cost of the system and its limited usefulness in transferring records for migrant children. In particular, the panel noted: "For those who are currently migratory, MSRTS is no longer the primary method of transferring records. School systems exchange information about migratory students the same way they do for all students—by mail, telephone and fax.

---

[1]   [Note: The issue of burden is a major concern of the Department and has been discussed many times with State educators since the 1991 Commission's report, and was also one of the primary questions addressed in the May 28, 2002, Federal Register notice ("the May 2002 notice"), discussed on page 9. In the notice, the Department invited interested members of the public to comment on the question of collecting minimum data elements: "What will be the burden of collecting the data? Will the value of sharing the data outweigh the burden of data collection?" Of the 23 respondents to that question, 79 percent considered the burden to be "heavy" and 74 percent of the respondents felt that the value of the data would not outweigh the burden of collection. The resolution of the problem of limiting the data collection burden to the States remains an elusive one.]

Research shows that the primary use of the MSRTS is to document eligibility and migratory status….". The panel recommended that, instead of operating the MSRTS, the funds should be used for direct services to migrant children.

In January 1994, the Arkansas State Department of Education in conjunction with the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) submitted a proposal to the Department to modify the MSRTS for pilot-testing a one-page student record. The Arkansas State Department of Education and the NASDME promoted the one-page record as a solution to the data intensive MSRTS. This solution was offered because over the course of 25 years, the MSRTS record gradually increased in size under the direction of the NASDME. The individual student record was expanded to include test scores, academic skill lists, and other data useful for State reporting, but data-intensive for local schools to enter and maintain.

The GAO provided a report in February 1994 examining the issue of children who change schools frequently and the help that federal educational programs, such as Migrant Education and Chapter 1, provide. The GAO report found in part, that the MSRTS was slow, incomplete, and used infrequently. With the MSRTS, records took about one week, on average, from the time of the request to the arrival of a hard copy; however it was not uncommon for records to take up to a month to arrive. Over half of all student records lacked test data, and frequently, instructional and health data as well. If there were a small number of migrant children in a school district, many migrant program personnel were much more likely to use paper records sent from the previous school than request records from the MSRTS. Therefore, the GAO recommended that the Department determine the feasibility of using electronic student record systems, such as ones being adopted by some States and school districts for all students, instead of the MSRTS. The Department agreed with the GAO recommendation to determine the feasibility of replacing the MSRTS and began to investigate other options.

In 1994, the Department contracted with Westat, Inc. to conduct a study on the "Alternatives for Transferring Migrant Student Records".   The study's objectives were to:

1) Describe available methods of transferring records in a timely and cost-effective manner, including methods using widely available technology; and

2) Describe the relevance of records transfer to school systems, highlighting the current experiences and views of individuals who are experienced with and knowledgeable about record transfer systems.

The study found that the problem of transferring records from school to school as students move is not unique to the children of migrant workers or to the schools they attend. Schools and districts have developed ad hoc systems for coping with these transfers, which include setting minimal information requirements for enrollment and placement. In 1994, school officials said they would use the information if they had it, but they neither expected parents to carry records nor expected the prior school/districts

to be particularly prompt in forwarding information once it was requested. As a result, the telephone was the most commonly used method to transfer information.[2]

Based on these and other studies, the Department and Congress concluded that the MSRTS should be discontinued. However, States remained responsible for ensuring the linkage and transfer of migrant student records using their existing resources. In June 1995, the MSRTS was terminated. Currently no centralized system provides for records transfer or generates child count data used in the allocation of Migrant Education Program (MEP) funds.

In 2002, the Department released a study entitled "Coordinating the Education of Migrant Students: Lessons Learned From the Field" completed by The George Washington University's Center for Equity and Excellence in Education ("Lessons Learned"). This study examined the coordination mechanisms used between migrant education programs in different States and school districts to mitigate and overcome the negative effects of educational disruption caused by migration in pursuit of temporary or seasonal work in agriculture or fishing.   The study listed the information management issues related to secondary credit accrual as one of the most critical challenges for interstate coordination.

Currently, through NCLB, Congress has directed the Department to, "assist the States in developing effective methods for the electronic transfer of student records and in determining the number of migratory children in each State." In particular, in section 1308(b), Congress required the Department, in consultation with the States, to ensure the linkage of migrant student record systems for the purpose of electronically exchanging among the States health and educational information for migratory students. The linkage of migrant student record systems, including those systems used before or after the enactment of NCLB, is to occur in a cost-effective manner. Congress further directed the Department to initiate this effort by publishing for public comment a proposed set of data elements that each State receiving funds under Title I, Part C, shall be required to collect for the purposes of the electronic transfer of migrant student information and the requirements that States shall meet for immediate access to such information.

III.   Migrant Student Record Linking System and Continuity of Service

This report is organized around the three topics that Congress required be addressed:

   A. The progress of States in developing and linking electronic records transfer systems;

   B. Recommendations for the development and linkage of such systems; and

---

[2] Note: At the time of the 1999 Report on Migrant Student Records the most frequently used method of migrant student record transfer was facsimile.

C. Recommendations for measures that may be taken by States and the Department to ensure continuity of services provided for migratory students.

A. Progress of States in Developing and Linking Electronic Records Transfer Systems

---

Since the termination of the MSRTS in 1995, States have made considerable efforts to develop their own electronic record systems for collecting and maintaining migrant student data. States and local operating agencies commonly use these systems for program administration and project management as well as to share basic student information within each State. Only one of these electronic record systems, the New Generation System (NGS), was specifically designed to "transfer" migrant students' education and health information on an interstate basis.

Private and non-profit vendors developed and provide support for the three major migrant student record systems that are currently in use by 42 States. A description of each of these systems is provided below. The other States are using custom electronic migrant student record systems that were developed by an in-house or outside consultant. [3]

- **Management Information System 2000 (MIS2000)** – This system was developed by Management Services for Education Data (MS/EdD) in Little Rock, Arkansas and is used by 26 States. [4] MIS2000 is a stand-alone system, although MSEdD also provides a central, consolidated database for its users, allowing them to share data on a regional, intra-State, or inter-State basis. However, according to the October 1999 Report on Migrant Student Record Systems, not all States are aware that the consolidated database exists or are reluctant to use it. MIS2000 offers reporting capabilities and can be customized for individual States. To maximize the potential for exchange of information among their MIS2000 data systems, a group of States (Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Maryland, Connecticut, New York and New Hampshire) formed the East Atlantic/Caribbean Consortium. The Consortium standardized their State systems by selecting the same vendor system and agreeing on a set of common data elements.

- **New Generation System (NGS)** – Developed by the Texas Department of Education, it is a centralized database housed in Austin, Texas with Internet accessibility for the 10 States that use this system. [5] Three of these 10 States use databases developed by their internal staffs and export their data into NGS.

---

[3] The States using Microsoft Access database systems are MI, RI, VT. States using other custom databases are DC, FL, ID, KS, MA, OR, WV.

[4] The States using MIS2000 are AK, AL, AR, CT, HI, IA, KY, LA, MD, ME, MN, MO, MS, NC, ND, NE, NH, NV, NY, OK, PA, PR, SC, SD, TN, VA.

[5] The States using NGS are CO, DE, IL, MT, NM, OH, TX, UT, WA, WI.

- **COEStar** – Tromik Technology Corporation in Little Rock, Arkansas developed COEStar to collect data recorded on the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) form which is used as the primary data collection form for documenting the eligibility of migrant students. The data are then stored on the user's local PC. Six States use COEStar to maintain information on migrant students.[6]

The following chart depicts the systems used by States in 1999 versus systems used in 2003:

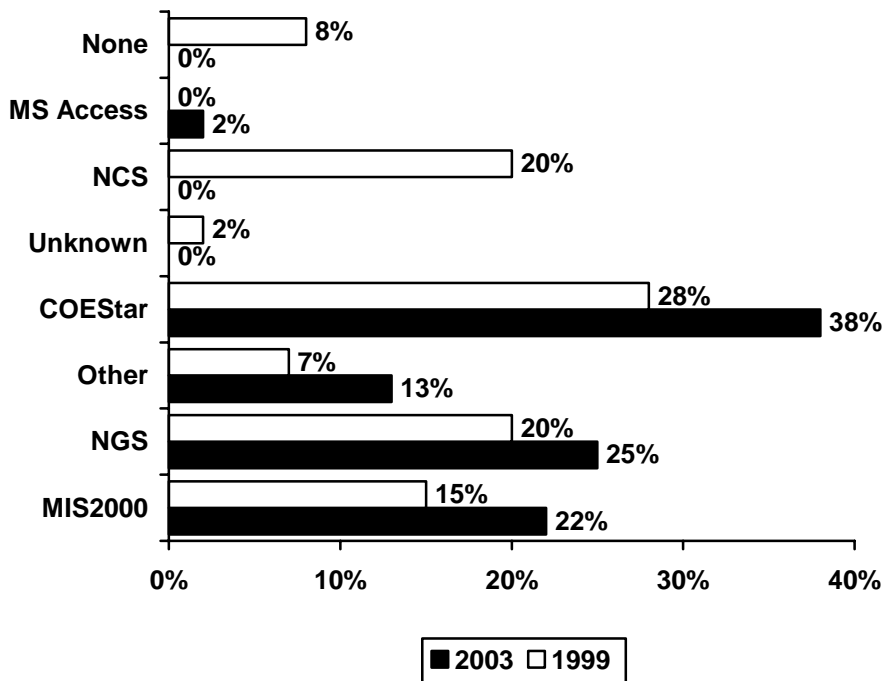**Figure 1: Number of States Using Each System (1999 versus 2003)**
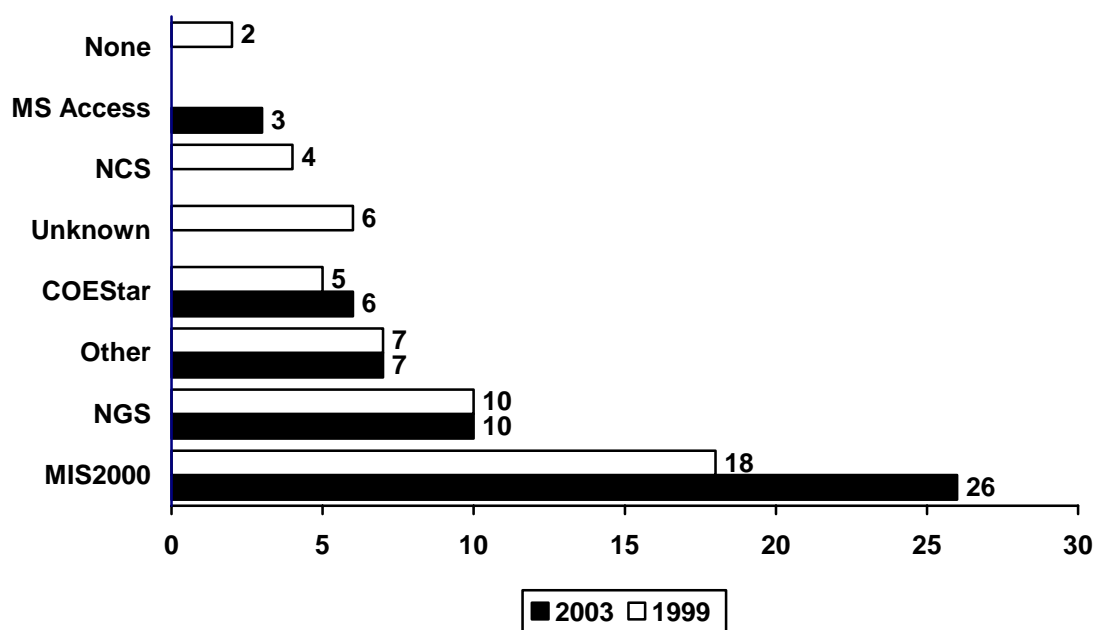
As shown in Figure 1, the majority of States are using MIS2000 to maintain their migrant student records. Note that National Computer System (NCS) discontinued its electronic student records database and was not used by States in 2003.

As shown in Figure 2 (next page), although 50% of the States use MIS2000, this represents only 22% of the migrant students nationwide because the system has a disproportionate number of the smaller States. COEStar maintains the records of 38% of the nation's migrant student population including records for the State of California, which has the largest migrant student population. NGS maintains records for 25% of migrant children.

---

[6] The States using COEStar are AZ, CA, GA, IN, NJ, WY.

Figure 2: Percentage of Migrant Students By System (1999 versus 2003)

System	1999	2003
None	8%	0%
MS Access	0%	2%
NCS	20%	0%
Unknown	2%	0%
COEStar	28%	38%
Other	7%	13%
NGS	20%	25%
MIS2000	15%	22%

■ 2003   □ 1999

While States can share student data using the NGS system, and MIS2000 has the capability of sharing information across States through use of an MSEdD consolidated database, no single mechanism currently enables all of the various electronic student record systems to share migrant student data on a national basis.

B. Recommendations for the Development and Linkage of Electronic Migrant Student Record Systems

This section provides a brief summary of the Department's consultations with the States, the results of those consultations, and a set of findings and recommendations for the development and linkage of electronic migrant student record systems.

STATE CONSULTATIONS

Over the course of the last several years, the Department has had extensive conversations with the States and has gathered information relative to State migrant student record systems. As part of the consultations, the Department has developed agreements on how to proceed with efforts to improve access to migrant student records, discussed potential methods of linking State migrant student record systems, and received advice from States on the development of the minimum data elements needed to exchange student information for facilitating school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual

planning for migrant students. A brief description of these consultations and information gathering efforts with the States follows.

- **Records Transfer Work Group** – On January 7, 1999, the Department convened a work group comprised of 10 State Directors of Migrant Education to assist the Department in setting a course of action that would lead to significant improvements in the transfer of migrant student records. During the following five months, the Work Group met and prepared a document that detailed nine "Principles for Leading Efforts to Improve Access to Migrant Student Records" (Appendix A). The nine principles were refined and subsequently adopted by the State Directors of Migrant Education on June 16, 1999.

- **Report on Migrant Student Record Systems** – The Department conducted an inquiry to learn if viable options for connecting existing State and local student information systems exist. The resulting study documented the current configuration and capabilities of each State's migrant student record system and evaluated the feasibility of electronically connecting all of the different State systems. Forty-six States were interviewed, and although 44 of them had an electronic system in place for tracking the migrant students in their State, when requests were made for records, <u>the primary means of providing the data was via facsimile</u>. The report identified a web-enabled transfer system, a consolidated database, and a centralized database as the three alternative strategies for connecting State migrant student record systems.

- **Common Data Elements (CDE) Committee** – On April 12, 2000, the Department formed the CDE Committee comprised of 12 members who were nominated by the State Directors of Migrant Education and charged with recommending a set of common minimum data elements that would provide essential information for use by teachers, counselors, and other migrant education personnel. The identified elements would be adequate to conduct activities that would increase the rate of high school completion for interstate secondary migrant students since studies had identified information on secondary credit accrual as one of the most critical challenges for interstate coordination. The group met four times over a period of six months and identified a preliminary list of data elements needed to support the enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual of migrant students.

- <u>**Federal Register**</u> **Notice of Proposed Requirements and Minimum Data Elements** – Section 1308 (b)(2)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, requires the Secretary of Education to determine the minimum data elements that each State shall collect and maintain. The Department used the work of the CDE committee to develop a proposed list of Minimum Data Elements and requirements and published the list in the May 2002, notice for public comment. The Department received comments from twenty-four States regarding the value and necessity of the data elements for

enrollment, placement, and graduation support, and the burden involved in collecting such data.

- **Annual State Director Meetings** – The Department shared information on the potential methods for linking State migrant student record systems with State Directors of Migrant Education on February 14, 2001. Information on the responses to the <u>Federal Register</u> publication of proposed Minimum Data Elements were compiled and presented to the States at the Annual Migrant Education Director's meeting on February 27, 2003. In responses to the <u>Federal Register</u> publication, a number of States requested a final opportunity to comment on the minimum set of elements before the data elements are finalized. The Department provided the States that opportunity and analyzed the resulting comments to determine the final draft of the minimum data elements necessary for records transfer that are listed in [Appendix B.](#)

- **Focus Groups** – The Department also contracted for a series of eleven focus groups to solicit reactions to the usefulness and applicability of the minimum data elements from the primary users of the information—guidance counselors or MEP staff functioning as counselors. The draft reports submitted by the focus groups to the Department on February 24, 2003, indicated that they generally believed that the collection of the data was important and that the right set of data elements were requested, although some of the data elements may not be readily available.

The Department analyzed the feedback from the various meetings and has determined that the problems involved with the development of a successful system to link migrant student records are recurring ones, still prevalent years after the demise of the MSRTS and not resolved by the development of individual State systems. Many migrant educators and school personnel agree that a system that made accurate and complete migrant student records immediately available to school personnel when the children arrive would be valuable. Many focus group participants and, to a lesser degree, respondents to the <u>Federal Register</u> notice expressed a belief that an effective electronic linkage of migrant student education records would address many of the challenges that highly mobile migrant students face with regard to school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual decisions. They believed that such a system could also provide efficient access to birth and immunization records.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In presenting its recommendations, the Department discusses the findings that led to each recommendation.

FINDING #1 – **It is feasible to connect the existing electronic State migrant student record systems.**

The Department contracted for a study to document the current configuration and capabilities of each State's migrant student record system, to conduct research on the acquired data, and to evaluate the feasibility of electronically connecting all the different State systems. Three basic strategies for connecting State migrant student record systems were identified:

1. **Web-Enabled Transfer System** – A web-based form would be created that facilitates the requesting, receiving, and tracking of data in an agreed upon format via the Internet. The transfer of data would use file transfer protocol (FTP), email, or fax. Such a system would need to include a student record locator so that requestors can query the locations from which they need data.

2. **Consolidated Database** – States would retain local control of their data and periodically upload a set of common data elements to a consolidated database for access by all authorized users.

3. **Centralized Database** – Information would be maintained in one location and would be accessible by multiple methods such as dial-up, dedicated circuit, or the Internet.

Based on the contractor's recommendation, the Department has determined that a consolidated database strategy is the most promising option. Such an approach provides instant access to nationwide data via the web and a single point of contact "one stop shopping." While a centralized database offers some advantages (e.g., centralized control of data elements), it requires States to drop the existing systems in which they have invested time and money. The web-enabled transfer system's major disadvantages are that it will not provide instant access to nationwide data and relies upon the continual availability of individuals at the school level to respond to requests from receiving schools to forward records. Records transfer in a web-enabled transfer system is a particular problem in summer or non-regular school periods when school staff may not be present to acknowledge the record request.

RECOMMENDATION – Conduct further research to identify the most advantageous record linking strategy, specifically exploring a consolidated database.

There are a number of ways in which migrant student records could be consolidated and made available to system users. A web-based consolidated database system with a well-designed user interface is one option worth exploring. The Department plans to conduct a market research conference to solicit ideas from industry experts on the best technological strategies for linking migrant student records and implementing a phased development approach. To implement the selected technology, the Department will then work with the States to develop procedures that help States identify the students who are most likely to move from school to school. Such a strategy will enable States to focus the majority of their data collection and maintenance energies on a much smaller group of students, and thus, reduce the data burden problems and improve the timeliness of such data. To link the existing State systems effectively, the current systems must be reviewed

again in greater detail to determine the compatibility of the data and the options available for electronic connectivity to other State systems.

The Department will need to work with States to specify the detailed user and system requirements that are essential for developing a useful system that meets the requirements expressed by the States. The system must have multiple levels of security and appropriate processes and procedures in place to ensure privacy of data.

In addition, the States will require system set-up support, training, and documentation on the new migrant record linking mechanism. Training is required to communicate data integrity business rules, quality control procedures, information process flows, security requirements, timing requirements for data entry and data availability, as well as instructions in system use.

FINDING #2 – States are concerned about the burden (cost) of collecting and maintaining student data.

As noted earlier, any enthusiasm for a new record linking mechanism of electronically exchanging migrant student records is tempered by past and present experiences with management information systems and States' and local educational agencies' response to federal education program requirements. Many States are very concerned about the new record keeping requirements, specifically dealing with students' grades and coursework needed for placement and credit accrual for secondary migrant students.

> "*The burden of collecting this information will be tremendous in forcing migrant funds to be used for data collection and not direct services to migrant children.*" (Focus Group B Participant)

The focus group participants based their concerns on the anticipation that the new record-keeping requirements for secondary credit accrual data would (1) overwhelm staff with additional tasks; (2) add time-intensive activities to support the revision and maintenance of existing data; and (3) create duplicative data collection functions in the State. While many of the proposed minimum data elements are already available in existing State migrant student record systems, the data elements specifically needed to support secondary students' course placement and credit accrual are not usually readily available. Entering this data would require extensive efforts on the part of States.

In discussing the potential burden of a new record linking mechanism, respondents to the Federal Register notice and participants in focus groups indicated that a new record linking mechanism will fail if States and local school districts need to maintain parallel migrant student information systems. In addition, the focus groups expressed some concern about the federal government's ability to achieve the level of cross-system buy-in that would permit systems to share information.

RECOMMENDATION – Analyze the costs of implementing a new migrant student record linking mechanism, in particular for secondary course placement and credit accrual purposes.

The additional cost of maintaining data and additional staff needed for course placement and secondary credit accrual decisions must be addressed. The Department will conduct a feasibility study and cost analysis to compare the costs to the Department and States of the various record linking mechanisms identified. The feasibility study and cost analysis are initial steps in the Action Plan.

Also, the Department will provide additional guidance to the States regarding the need for effective resource "targeting" decisions that properly balance the implementation of program requirements and providing services to migrant children.[7]

FINDING #3 – **The primary purpose of a new record linking mechanism to exchange migrant student records electronically should be to facilitate the proper and timely school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual of highly mobile migrant students.**

The initial work of the CDE Committee focused on determining "who will do what specific tasks (with student information) resulting in what benefits." The committee was then asked to determine which of the identified tasks and benefits were most important to the academic success of migrant students. As a result, the committee determined that the primary purposes of a new record linking mechanism for exchanging migrant student records are to provide school and migrant education personnel with the data essential to facilitate (1) the timely enrollment of school-age migrant children, (2) the placement of migrant children in the appropriate grade level and courses of instruction, and (3) for secondary students only, the accrual of course credits needed to graduate from high school.

Migrant educators believe it important to have access to basic school enrollment data and proof of immunizations for timely enrollment of preschool, elementary, and secondary migrant children in a new school. However, most migrant educators view migrant students enrolled in the secondary grades as having the highest need for the timely exchange of student information. Local schools and migrant education programs need secondary student records to support critical course selection and placement decisions and the accrual of course credits needed to help migrant students graduate from high

---

[7]   MEPs must "target" resources to ensure that services are focused on those migrant children who have the greatest need for supplemental instructional and support services that are not already provided by other programs. Targeting requires (1) the proper and timely identification and recruitment of eligible migrant children, (2) effective assessment of migrant children's special educational needs, (3) the proper allocation of MEP resources, (4) the selection of migrant students based on need and in keeping with the priority-for services requirement, and (5) the delivery of services at a sufficient level of quality and intensity so as to give reasonable promise of meeting the program and projects measurable outcomes.

school. The ability of States and school districts to share the records of migrant students is viewed as critical for <u>interstate</u> secondary migrant students.

Secondary education presents the greater challenge because of the problem of credit accrual. Migrant students at elementary grades need instructional continuity, but the instructional demands of elementary-level migrant students can be met through basic education services and other means. However, the difficulties arise at the high school level and stem partially from the lack of information that is necessary to guide timely placement and awarding of course credit. Students with multiple school moves do not show up in States' records if those records are not linked with those of other States. The migrant record linking mechanism should give special focus to providing information necessary for credit accrual for highly mobile secondary students while providing the basic information needed for enrollment and placement for all students. The primary "users" of this student information are school guidance counselors, school registrars, and migrant education specialists. In contrast, the old MSRTS viewed MEP-funded classroom teachers, school nurses, and guidance counselors as the primary users of the system.

RECOMMENDATION – Design the migrant student record exchange linking mechanism to facilitate school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual decisions for migrant children, to promote timeliness and to focus particularly on the needs of highly mobile secondary students.

The new migrant student record exchange linking mechanism should be designed to facilitate:

- The timely enrollment in school of migrant students who have <u>recently</u> moved across school district boundaries due to their migrant lifestyle. Information needed to accomplish this purpose includes basic student and family data, name and location of prior school enrollments, and documentation of immunizations;

- The placement of migrant students who have <u>recently</u> moved across school district boundaries due to their migrant lifestyle in the appropriate grade and courses of instruction. Information needed to accomplish this purpose for elementary students includes prior grade, the results of academic assessments, and notice of any special education or health concerns. Information needed to accomplish this purpose for secondary students includes the above plus information on the courses completed or partially completed; and

- The accrual of credits needed by secondary migrant students who have moved or are likely to move <u>repeatedly</u> across school district boundaries due to their migrant lifestyle for graduation. Information needed to accomplish this purpose for secondary students includes the above plus more extensive information on coursework so that partial credits may be granted.

In addition, a new migrant student record exchange linking mechanism should also support several other important purposes:

- To assist the Department in determining the number of migratory children in each State as required by section 1308(b)(1); and

- To serve as an analytical tool for answering questions about the migrant student population (e.g., migration patterns, missed enrollments, unduplicated national counts, etc.).

FINDING #4 – **No consensus exists within the migrant education community on maintaining the minimum data elements necessary to facilitate the proper and timely school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual of migrant students.**

The Department published a proposed set of minimum data elements in the May 2002, Federal Register notice. As noted earlier, the Department worked with the field to develop its proposal and received input on the proposed data elements through a variety of forums and methods. Most of the respondents felt that the proposed data elements were the correct set of data elements for the purposes of enrollment, placement, and credit accrual decisions. In cases where individuals disagreed, their position was not usually based on the functional utility of the data items, but rather on (1) concerns about the timeliness and burden of collecting and maintaining student data, (2) the belief that a "migrant student record" would not be accepted as an "official" record (and thus not used by local school/district officials), and (3) that the costs of collecting the data elements would divert substantial amounts of fiscal resources away from direct services.

Of the 75 data fields that were proposed as minimum data elements, the States expressed less concern with those elements that were already available in the existing State migrant student record systems. Information that falls into this category includes basic student and school enrollment data and consists of about 48 data elements. A number of individuals who commented did express concerns about maintaining detailed school contact information (i.e., names, telephone extensions, etc.) because they believe this type of information changes too frequently, and thus would often be out-of-date and inaccurate.

The greatest split in opinions, however, arose on the need to collect and maintain data elements that are specifically used in making course placement and credit accrual decisions for secondary migrant students. Advocates of collecting prior course history and course credit data argue that this information is needed to (1) improve the continuity of instruction for secondary migrant students so that they receive appropriate course content and instruction, and (2) help place secondary migrant students in appropriate courses so that they can accrue partial or full course credits in subject areas they need for graduation. As noted above, opponents of collecting prior course history and course credit data are mainly worried that such a requirement will require additional staff and will divert program funds needed for direct instructional or supportive services.

RECOMMENDATION – Issue a list of minimum data elements, in cooperation with State and local educational officials, for publication in the <u>Federal Register</u> to help States to better plan on-going modifications and improvements to their State migrant student record systems:

The Department proposes to issue a list of minimum data elements as it further explores a solution for linking the States' migrant student record systems. Greater definition of data elements, their characteristics, and their relationships to each other will be necessary to define the functional requirements for linking the State migrant student record systems.

The Department also recommends using a multi-phased approach to exploring options for linking State migrant student record systems. Phase one would focus on those elements that are readily available in most State systems such as personal student and school information. This will allow for a basic set of information on which to test the actual system linking strategy, the consolidation of student records, and exchange of information. Phase two would consider data on academic assessments, special education and health alerts, and immunizations. Phase three would focus on elements necessary for the purpose of course placement and credit accrual decisions for secondary students. Elements that support credit accrual such as coursework information would be required after States have had a sufficient opportunity to develop strategies that allow for the efficient collection of these data.

FINDING #5 – A variety of non-technological obstacles to effective information transfer exist: some educational officials do not accept electronic migrant student records in place of official school transcripts; some do not enter data promptly or are otherwise not as cooperative as is necessary for electronic linkage to work properly. Finally, school districts are concerned about the additional labor, burden, and costs of collecting and maintaining student data.

Respondents identified a number of other factors that could detract and hinder full implementation of a new record linking mechanism for exchanging migrant student records. States and districts are prioritizing their efforts to address rising costs, and making this initiative a priority for them will be a challenge. Also, while some States historically have collaborated with other States to accomplish goals that affect children who migrate nationally, others have not. The cooperation of all States is essential for a new record linking mechanism of exchanging migrant student records to be successful.

Many States believe that a new record linking mechanism for electronically exchanging migrant student records will divert existing MEP funds from direct student services to data collection activities. In particular, States are concerned that collecting additional secondary school data on migrant students needed for course placement and secondary credit accrual decisions will be burdensome and costly. "Lessons Learned," reviewed four groups of three or four districts (Trading Partners) that share students who move back and forth. The study documented the need for additional staff to coordinate student information between the various schools and to communicate the requirements of the

school and State from which the student intends to graduate. The Department's study determined that information technology is important, but without a person who uses the data appropriately, the primary goal of credit accrual and graduation will not be achieved.

The participants in the various Department-sponsored meetings expressed concerns about several other matters not related to the technology of records transfer, including the timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of migrant student records; the willingness of local school officials to accept and use electronic migrant student records for local decisions (e.g., credit accrual, proof of immunization); the degree of compliance with data input requirements in the home base "sending" States and districts; and the additional labor, burden, and costs of collecting and maintaining student data. These concerns are based on both past and present experiences with student information systems and local authorities' response to federal education program requirements.

The Department determined that for records transfer to be successful, incentives for participation and appropriate consequences for non-participation should result. Some State Migrant Education Directors have advised the Department that an official transcript from the originating school is required regardless of what information is made available through a records transfer linking mechanism before credits can be granted or proper placement can occur. If student records provided by the records transfer linking mechanism are not acceptable by all States in lieu of an official school transcript of the same information, there is little benefit to linking and transferring the migrant student's record in this manner. While linking the systems is a statutory requirement (Sec. 1308 (b)(2)(A)), encouraging school staff to expend the effort needed to exchange migrant student records will be difficult without incentives and consequences.

In both the focus groups and responses to the May 2002 notice, a substantial number of the respondents expressed doubt that an electronic system for exchanging migrant student records could be designed to provide the right data in a timely fashion. One focus group member summed up this sentiment by stating, "*The kids move faster than the data.*" Another focus group member expressed this concern by questioning the relative advantage of an electronic student record system: "*The system has to be more effective than just picking up the phone and calling the last school the student attended.*" Respondents also were not convinced that the home-base "sending" States and districts had the motivation and capacity to update their migrant student record systems during the short time periods when migrant students withdraw from school to migrate with their families.

Several of the focus groups noted that, even if MEP resources are available to input data, the collection of student data is problematic. In many schools and school districts, the transmittal of student records must move from the classroom teacher, to a secretary, before it reaches the school or district's record system. This process often takes weeks. A number of individuals in the focus groups noted that school secretaries are already overburdened and do not have the time to pull the records for migrant students who have left the school, when they have tasks to complete for the students who are still in attendance. In addition, a number of respondents mentioned that student data are not

centralized in one location within the school system and MEP personnel do not have electronic links to the local school information management systems used by district and school personnel, which results in inefficiencies (i.e., necessitating the reentering of data). All of these factors—insufficient staff to enter data, delays in accessing data, and the need to re-enter data from one system to another—have proven in the past to result in inaccurate, incomplete student records that often arrive too late to be of use.

Focus group participants felt that transferred information would be useful only if it could be accessed almost immediately upon a student's arrival. This requires that data retrieval be done in real-time or near real-time and that all sending States begin to enter their data immediately at the time of student enrollment and student withdrawal. This is particularly difficult for some States during those times of the school year when migrant students arrive or depart in large numbers and there are not enough staff to enter the data. Although most respondents to the May 2002 notice agreed that records should be timely and accurate to be of value, they also felt the proposed four-day turnaround time was too ambitious. Late arriving student information for secondary students could result in inaccurate credit accrual decisions and delayed graduation while inaccurate or late information on immunizations could result in grade school children receiving unnecessary immunizations.

Several focus group participants stated that their most highly mobile migrant students with student record challenges were not those migrating from other States, but from countries outside the United States. Linking of State records systems would not address the needs of those students.

Problems with "timeliness" are caused also by difficulties in identifying migrant students as they move. Several respondents commented that the migrant students are already enrolled in school before the MEP personnel locates and identifies the students as eligible for the program. In these cases, the school may have already requested the students' records from their prior school, and thus, the time and resources put into an electronic student record system are wasted.

Successfully addressing the "timeliness" concern is central to the success of any record linking mechanism of electronically exchanging migrant students records. The lack of accurate, complete, and timely student records was a major reason for the failure of the MSRTS.

RECOMMENDATION – Encourage the necessary level of data collection and student record maintenance in cooperation with the States and local educational officials.

Lack of full cooperation and acceptance of information is a long-standing problem that first surfaced with the implementation of the MSRTS. The Department will continue to work with States to ensure the migrant record linking mechanism results in a uniform migrant student record that is useful and acceptable to all States. The Department will encourage through appropriate incentives the accurate and timely collection and

maintenance of data by emphasizing its importance in meetings with State and local educational agency personnel and by evaluating the progress of States in sharing migrant student records in a timely manner.

C. Recommendations for measures that may be taken to ensure the continuity of services provided migratory students

The exchange of migrant student information is a cooperative effort among school districts and the States. For the exchange of student information to improve the continuity of educational and educationally related services, States must implement complementary activities that improve the likelihood that student data are used and useful.

"Lessons Learned," reviewed four groups of school districts (i.e., "trading partners") that share students who move back and forth between them. The study identified numerous practices, and four general strategies that recurred across the trading partners sites:

1) Alignment of district policies;
2) Improved student information exchange and access;
3) Staff resources to promote credit accrual; and
4) Opportunities for supplemental instruction.

The following findings and recommendations to improve the continuity of services are based on the Department's experience with implementing migrant education programs and the results of the Department's study.

FINDING #1 – **Effective identification and recruitment practices are essential to improving the continuity of services being provided to migrant students.**

States and local operating agencies must find and enroll eligible migrant students (that are shared with other local operating agencies both within and across States) so that local, State, and federally funded services are provided quickly. Once a migrant child has been identified, States and local operating agencies can work with one another to ensure the continuity of the student's education. If migrant students are not identified in a timely manner, coordination activities cannot begin because local school personnel may not search for migrant student records that can help with enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual decisions.

RECOMMENDATION - Continue the Department's efforts to improve the capacity of States to identify and recruit eligible migrant children in a timely manner.

Through its Identification and Recruitment Initiative, the Department will continue to work with SEA and local operating agency personnel to improve migrant child identification and recruitment practices. Specifically, the Department will (1) establish and sustain a professional network of identification and recruitment coordinators, (2) develop resources that help States strengthen their identification and recruitment practices and quality control systems to ensure effective targeting, (3) disseminate "best practices" for migrant child identification and recruitment and determining migrant child eligibility, and (4) update and improve access to current federal policy guidance on migrant child eligibility, identification and recruitment.

FINDING #2 – **State MEPs should be encouraged to place staff (i.e., guidance counselors, migrant resource teachers, or program specialists) strategically to facilitate school enrollment, grade/course placement, and credit accrual decisions.**

Given differences in school curriculum requirements and the high caseloads of most regular guidance personnel, more professionals are needed to attend to and negotiate coordination between the education experiences of migrant students and the requirements of the school, school district, and State from which the student intends to graduate. Information management systems are important, but without a person to use the data activities that improve the continuity of education will not be initiated, especially with regard to credit accrual. Services that address the problem of credit accrual demand substantial efforts in time, money, and allocation of resources. These strategies also require more communication across schools to resolve differences in course offerings and graduation requirements.

RECOMMENDATION – **Continue the Department's efforts to encourage States to use migrant funds for activities that leverage local resources on behalf of migrant students, reinforcing the supplemental role of migrant education**.

In a number of States, MEPs support teachers, aides, counselors, and advocates who are intended to provide services and ensure migrant children receive the federal, State, and local services to which they are entitled. State MEPs should be encouraged to examine the qualifications and deployment of program staff and ensure that MEP staff are able to use migrant student records effectively (or help local staff use the records) to coordinate the delivery of appropriate local education agency services, in addition to the provision of direct MEP services as needed.

FINDING #3 – **Migrant children move across school district, State, and national borders. Improving the continuity of education for migrant students requires effective interstate and intrastate coordination.**

Interstate and intrastate coordination requires patience, hard work, commitment, institutional support, and perhaps most importantly, opportunities for the collaborators to build a relationship with one another. People are far more likely to complete shared tasks if they feel they are part of a community that is working together. "Lessons Learned," documented the importance of creating opportunities for migrant educators to meet, learn about one another's situations, explore problems, and then set about to find solutions to the problems.

RECOMMENDATION – **Support efforts to build relationships amongst those educators who share migrant children.**

The Department should continue to promote on-going opportunities for migrant educators to meet and discuss solutions to the kinds of problems that highly mobile migrant students continue to face. The value and benefit of these meetings will be increased if the Department encourages participants to share "hard" data on student needs and examines the strengths, weaknesses, and effectiveness of strategies advanced to solve problems related to the migrant lifestyle.

IV. Conclusion

Although some States have developed alternative methods for maintaining migrant student records since the termination of the Migrant Student Records Transfer System (MSRTS), a single acceptable mechanism for electronically linking and transferring migrant student information nationally does not exist. The major barriers to establishing a successful migrant student record transfer system are not rooted in the lack of adequate technological solutions, but in more complex non-technological concerns. The Department will continue to explore a variety of solutions considering the needs of migrant students, State and local educational officials, the latest technological innovations, and the costs to all parties involved.

Despite the non-technological challenges identified in this report, the Department believes that, in cooperation with States, a successful system for exchanging migrant student records can be developed and will benefit migrant students nationwide. The ability to exchange migrant student records efficiently will facilitate the timely enrollment and placement of all migrant students by providing better access to basic school enrollment and health information. An efficient records transfer system will particularly benefit highly mobile secondary migrant students by providing and maintaining course credit accrual information necessary for high school graduation.

The Department is committed to improving access to migrant student records at the school in which migrant students are enrolled. In concert with the services provided by local school districts, the services of the Title I, Part C, Migrant Education Program will help to ensure that all migrant students meet challenging State academic standards and achieve graduation from high school with an education that prepares the student for responsible leadership, further learning, and productive employment.

V.   Appendices

Appendix A

Records Transfer Work Group

Principles for Leading Efforts to Improve Access to Migrant Student Records

Key Principles
1. The key goals for the Migrant Education Program are (1) increasing the graduation rate of high school students, (2) helping migrant students to achieve proficiency on challenging State academic standards, and (3) resolving health conditions that prevent students' access to educational opportunities.
2. The highest priority situations requiring <u>timely</u> information sharing involve <u>interstate</u> migrant children who (1) are in secondary school grade levels and will benefit from course selection/placement and credit accrual activities and (2) require proof of immunizations for enrollment in school.
3. While States and local school districts should "transfer" cumulative school records for migrant students—like they do for non-migrant students--the Migrant Education Program is moving away from the use of physical "transfer records" to a "means of sharing essential student information" as its understanding of what MEPs need to be able to do for interstate migrant children in the high priority situations improves.
4. The Office of Migrant Education's (OME) active leadership, encouragement, and support are needed to facilitate the desired outcome of having all States able and willing to share information in a timely manner in the high priority situations.
5. Active involvement of State Directors and other key stakeholders in the problem solving process is critical to (1) building a working consensus about a solution strategy, and (2) the will to implement it.
6. At present, a single system solution may not be possible as it will not meet the diverse needs and contexts of all States, but a guarantee that a State's (or consortium's) system can support the sharing of information in a timely manner for students in the priority situations should be a basic requirement all systems are required to meet.
7. OME should lead a process to learn if viable options that could connect existing State and local student information systems exist. This may require (1) documenting the current configuration and capabilities of each State (or consortium) system, and (2) conducting research to identify "feasible" connectivity options.
8. If a particularly promising and feasible option exists, OME should allocate funds to support implementation of the connectivity option via an appropriate procurement process. This approach may require setting baseline standards that all systems must meet.
9. Although clear definitions of what constitutes "key" data for locating children (including a unique student identifier) and what is "essential" data for information sharing purposes need to be developed, groups assigned to work on this task "should not reinvent the wheel." Work groups should go back and resurrect prior work done on the "one-page-record" as a starting point.

Appendix B

Minimum Data Elements

The following table presents the proposed requirements for the minimum data elements that a State shall collect and maintain for the purpose of electronically exchanging, among the States, educational and health information for all migrant students.

The table lists the data elements by: (1) a data element identification number, (2) a code that identifies the primary user function(s) for which the data element is required, (3) the name of the data element, and (4) a data element definition.

In regard to the primary user functions for which a data element is required, the letter "E" indicates that the data element is required to help guidance counselors, school registrars, or migrant education specialists with the timely and efficient enrollment of migrant students in a school in the community in which the children currently reside. The letter "P" indicates that the data element is required to help guidance counselors or migrant education specialists with the proper placement of migrant students into courses and/or programs at the appropriate grade level. The letter "G" indicates that the data element is required to help guidance counselors or migrant education specialists with the provision of academic counseling that supports the completion of courses and the accrual of credits needed for graduation.

In addition, the data elements are grouped into one of five categories of data: (1) data elements that describe a student, (2) data elements that describe a school or project, (3) data elements that describe the student's graduation plan, (4) data elements that describe a student's course history, and (5) data elements that describe a student's assessment information.

Finally, although the data elements are listed once, a number of the data elements will be used for multiple entries in a migrant student record (e.g., "course title" will be used for each course in which a migrant student is enrolled).

#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS			
		STUDENT INFORMATION	
1	E	Student Record Number	A unique key assigned to a migrant student.
2	E	State Student Identification Number	An alternate identification number assigned to a student by a State.
3	E	Last Name1	Student's legal last name (paternal).
4	E	Last Name2	If appropriate, student's legal last name (maternal). [Note: Provides an option for a hyphenated or double last name.]
5	E	First Name	A name given to a student at birth, baptism, or during another naming ceremony, or through legal change.
6	E	Middle Name	A secondary name given to a student at birth, baptism, or during another naming ceremony, or through legal change.
7	E	Generation	An appendage, if any, used to denote a student's generation in his family (e.g., Jr., Sr., III).
8	E	Gender	A student's gender. 01 Female 02 Male

Appendix B

#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
9	E	Birth Date	The month, day, and year on which a student was born.
10	E	Birth Certificate Flag	The evidence by which a student's date of birth is confirmed.
			01 Birth certificate—A written statement or form issued by an Office of Vital Statistics verifying the name and birth date of the child as reported by the physician attending at the birth.
			02 Other official document (i.e., baptismal or church certificate, physician/hospital certificate, passport, previously verified school record, State-issued ID, driver's license).
			03 Self Report—Parent or student reports age, birth date, and place of birth.
11	E	Birth City	The name of the city in which the student was born.
12	E	Birth State	The postal abbreviation code for a State (within the United States), Outlying Area, or State (in another country) in which a student was born.
13	E	Birth Country	The name of the country in which a student was born.
14	E	Birth/Legal Parent1 Last Name	The last/surname of the natural or adoptive male parent having legal responsibility for a student.
15	E	Birth/Legal Parent1 First Name	The first name of the natural male parent having legal responsibility for a student.
16	E	Birth/Legal Parent2 Last Name	The last/surname of the natural or adoptive female parent having legal responsibility for a student.
17	E	Birth/Legal Parent2 First Name	The first name of the natural or adoptive female parent having legal responsibility for a student.
18	E	Current Parent/ Guardian Last Name	The last/surname of the adult serving as the student's local guardian. [Note: Provides an option for a hyphenated or double last name.]
19	E	Current Parent/ Guardian First Name	The first name of the adult serving as the student's local guardian.

Appendix B

			MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS
#	**Use(s)**	**Data Element**	**Definition**
20	P G	Grade Level	The grade level in which a school/project enrolls a student.
			01 Grade 1
			02 Grade 2
			03 Grade 3
			04 Grade 4
			05 Grade 5
			06 Grade 6
			07 Grade 7
			08 Grade 8
			09 Grade 9
			010 Grade 10
			011 Grade 11
			012 Grade 12
			013 Ungraded
			014 Pre-school
			015 Kindergarten
			016 Out-of-School
21	E P G	Withdrawal Date	The month, day, year on which a student withdrew from a school or project.
22	E	Ed Alert Flag	Alert for a special need/educational condition linked with a contact person.
23	E	Ed Alert Resolution Date	Month, day, and year the alert was resolved.
25	E	Med Alert Flag	Alert for a medical/health condition.
26	E	Med Alert Resolution Date	Month, day, and year the alert was resolved.
29	E	Immunization Date	The month, day, and year on which a student receives an immunization.
30	E	Immunization Type	The name of immunization that a student has received.
31		QAD (Qualifying Arrival Date)	The month, day, and year on which the family unit or the student (where the student is the worker) arrived at the place where the qualifying work was sought.
32		QAD From City	The name of the city in which the previous school district is located.

Appendix B

		MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS	
#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
33		QAD From State	The postal abbreviation code for a State (within the United States) or Outlying Area in which the previous school district is located.
34		QAD From Country	The abbreviation code for a country (other than the US) area in which the previous school district is located.
35		QAD To City	The name of the city in which the new school district is located.
36		QAD To State	The postal abbreviation code for a State (within the United States) or Outlying Area in which the new school district is located.
37		Residency Date	The month, day, and year on which the family unit or the student (where the student is the worker) establishes residency in a school district within a State.
38		Termination Date	The month, day, and year on which the student is no longer eligible for the Migrant Education Program.
39		Termination Flag	The reason for the end of student eligibility. 01 Non-migrant status, eligibility expired 02 Graduated 03 GED 04 Dropout 05 Deceased

<div align="center">

SCHOOL/PROJECT INFORMATION

</div>

#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
40	E P G	School/Facility Identification Code	A unique code assigned to each school, site, or facility providing educational and/or educationally related services.
41	E P G	School Name	The full legally or popularly accepted name of a school (or project providing educational and/or educationally-related services).
42	E P G	Address1	Line 1 of the mailing address. The street number and name or post office box number of a school's address.
43	E P G	Address2	Line 2 of the mailing address. The building, office, department, room, suite number of a school's address.
44	E P G	Address3	Line 3 of the mailing address.
45	E P G	City	The name of the city in which a school is located.

Appendix B

#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
46	E P G	District	The full legally or popularly accepted name of a local educational agency (i.e., school district or local operating agency).
47	E P	State	The postal abbreviation code for a State (within the United States) or Outlying Area in which a school or other facility is located.
48	E P G	Zip	The five or nine digit zip code portion of a school or other facility's address.
51	E G	Phone	The telephone number of the school or project contact person including the area code and extension, if applicable. Allow for an optional alternate phone number.
54	E P G	Enrollment Date	The month, day, and year on which a student enrolls in a school, project, or State and is eligible to receive instructional or support services during a given session.
55	P	Enrollment Type	The type of school/migrant education project in which instruction and/or support services are provided.
			01 Regular School
			02 Regular Term MEP-Funded Supplemental Program
			03 Summer/Intersession MEP-Funded Project
			04 Year Round MEP-funded Project
			05 Residency Only
56	P G	Designated School for Graduation Flag	An indicator that designates the school or facility from which a student expects to graduate and is linked with associated school or facility identification fields (i.e., district, city, state, zip code). Only one school may be designated for graduation at any one point in time.

GRADUATION PLAN INFORMATION (SECONDARY STUDENTS ONLY)

#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
59	G	Subject Area Requirements	Number of credits (Carnegie units) required in individual subject areas for graduation in the State from which the student is projected to graduate.
61	P G	Subject Area	The name of a subject area (e.g., History, English)

COURSE HISTORY INFORMATION (SECONDARY STUDENTS ONLY)

#	Use(s)	Data Element	Definition
62	P G	Course Title	The name of a course (e.g., Algebra III, American History, Art I, English III, English-10).

MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS			
#	**Use(s)**	**Data Element**	**Definition**
63	G	Course Type	An indication of the general nature and difficulty of instruction provided throughout a course.
			01 Regular (Default)—A course providing instruction (in a given subject matter area) that focuses primarily on general concepts for the appropriate grade level.
			02 Honors—An advanced level course designed for students who have earned honors status according to educational requirements.
			03 Pre-Advanced Placement—A course in preparation to admission to an AP Program.
		Course Type (continued)	04 Advanced Placement—An advanced, college-level course designed for students who achieve specific level of academic performance. Upon successful completion of the course and a standardized Advanced Placement examination, a student may receive college credit.
			05 International Baccalaureate-A program of study, sponsored and designed by International Baccalaureate Organization, that leads to examinations and meets the needs of secondary students between the ages of 16 and 19 years.
			06 Accepted as a high school equivalent—A secondary-level course offered at an education institution other than a secondary school (such as adult learning center or community college) or through correspondence or distance learning.
			07 Not Applicable.
64	G	Course Year	Calendar year in which the course was taken.
65	P G	Course Section	The prescribed duration of course taken.
			01 Full year
			02 Section A—One of two equal segments into which the course is divided.
			03 Section B—One of two equal segments into which the course is divided.

Appendix B

	MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS		
#	**Use(s)**	**Data Element**	**Definition**
66	P G	Term Type	The prescribed span of time that a course is provided, and in which students are under the direction and guidance of teachers and/or an educational institution.
			01 Full year
			02 Semester—A designation for the segment of a school year that is divided into two equal parts.
			03 Trimester— A designation for the segment of a school year that is divided into three equal parts.
		Term Type (continued)	04 Quarter— A designation for the segment of a school year that is divided into four equal parts.
			05 Quinmester— A designation for the segment of a school year that is divided into five equal parts.
67	P G	Grade-to-date	For courses that have NOT been completed (or credit granted), a numerical grade (percentage) of student performance for the grade-to-date that the student has completed at the time of withdrawal.
68	P	Clock Hours	For courses that have NOT been completed (or credit granted), the number of clock hours to date that the student has completed.
69	P	Final Grade	For courses that have NOT had credit granted, a final indicator of student performance in a class at the time of withdrawal as submitted by the instructor.
70	P	Credits Granted	The credits granted in Carnegie units for a given course or a section of a course (e.g., 1.0, .50, .33, .25, .20).

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

71	G	Assessment Name	The title or description, including a form number, if any, that identifies a particular assessment.

33

		MINIMUM DATA ELEMENTS	
#	**Use(s)**	**Data Element**	**Definition**
72	G	Assessment Type	The category of an assessment based on format and content.
			01 Achievement Test/State Assessment--An assessment to measure a student's present level of knowledge, skill, or competence in a specific area or subject.
			02 Advanced placement test--An assessment to measure the achievement of a student in a subject matter area, taught during high school, which may qualify him or her to bypass the usual initial college class in this area and begin his or her college work in the area at a more advanced level and possibly with college credit.
		Assessment Type (continued)	03 Language proficiency test--An assessment used to measure a student's level of proficiency (i.e., speaking, writing, reading, and listening) in either a native language or an acquired language.
			04 Exit Exam
			05 GED
			06 Special Education Assessment
			07 Early Childhood Development Assessment
			Other
73	G	Assessment Date	The month and year on which an assessment is administered.
74	G	Assessment Result	A score or statistical expression of the performance of a student on an assessment.
75	G	Type of Result	The metric in which results are presented.
			01 Proficiency level
			02 Percentile rank
			03 Pass/Fail (if failed enter numerical score)
			04 Normal curve equivalent
			05 Sections that have been successfully completed (e.g., GED).

Appendix C

Action Plan

The Department will take a measured approach to the implementation of the data linking and transfer mechanism. The Department will proceed with the following steps (1) conduct an initial market research conference to solicit opinions on the best use of technology to achieve the system requirements, (2) establish a User Review Panel to assist in creating requirements and overseeing system development, (3) develop the data linking and transfer mechanism in multiple phases with staggered deployment schedules, (4) establish effective tools to monitor and report on system effectiveness, and (5) hire an external company to conduct an independent system validation and verification.

The activities are defined below:

1. Market Research Conference—Industry members provide their ideas/options based on the detailed user requirements, regarding how to best resolve the problem of linking State migrant student record systems and the expected timeframe, cost, and risks involved with each solution.

2. User Review Panel—The Department convenes members of the Department and State representatives to review the contractor's system development activities and participate in system design, testing, and acceptance. The users would include staff who are ultimately responsible for entering or extracting data from the system.

3. Request for Proposal (RFP)—The Department seeks multiple contractors to complete the tasks identified in the Report to Congress including conducting a feasibility study, performing a cost analysis, and designing, developing and maintaining the data linking mechanism based on the selected approach. A data linking mechanism with a well-designed web user interface would need to be created that allows appropriate access to information and up-to-date information relevant to system availability, and policy or procedure changes. Contract tasks will also include State consultation, training, and coordination activities as necessary.

4. System Monitoring—The Department will provide technical oversight of the contract during the multiple development phases and provide periodic monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness and performance of the system developed for linking and transferring student records.

5. System Evaluation—Publish the RFP and establish a contract for regular independent verification and validation—external evaluation(s) of contract implementation and recommendations for continuous improvement.